



## The Care Workers' Charity Monthly Briefing

**Date: January 2026**

**Introduction:** The Care Workers Charity (The CWC) is committed to supporting and advocating for care workers across the UK. Each month, we collect insights and updates from our advocacy efforts, The Care Worker Advisory Board and Champions Project, and data collected from crisis grants and online communications with care workers. This briefing aims to inform policymakers and stakeholders of the ongoing challenges for the care sector workforce and the collective action needed to address them.

**1. Advocacy Work Updates:** The CWC continues to represent care workers' voices at key stakeholder meetings, including:

- Skills for Care: Workforce Strategy Oversight Executive Meeting Group
- Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC): Workforce Advisory Group
- IMPACT
- Centre for Care
- The Kings Fund
- Throughout the month, our CEO has actively participated in multiple meetings and webinars to ensure the experiences and perspectives of care workers are consistently represented at national and sectoral levels.

**2. Insights from The Care Worker Advisory Board and Champions Project:**

- **HMRC Information Session (15<sup>th</sup> January):** Advisory Board and Champions members took part in an information session with HMRC, supporting improved understanding of tax, income and financial responsibilities affecting care workers.
- **Casey Commission Listening Call (16<sup>th</sup> January):** Care workers participated directly in a listening call with the Casey Commission, ensuring their experiences informed discussions on the future of adult social care.
- **Engagement with Skills for Care:** We are actively engaging with Skills for Care on workforce pathway discussions, including the development of a survey and a series of engagement calls scheduled for early February to gather care worker insight.
- **In-Person Advisory Board and Champions Event (23<sup>rd</sup> January):** An in-person event brought together both existing members and new recruits to the project. The session focused on reflecting on Year 1 achievements, mapping

advocacy priorities for Year 2, and delivering mental wellbeing and financial wellbeing sessions. Feedback was positive, with participants highlighting that they felt listened to and valued, and that the session strengthened connection and shared purpose across the group.

- **Windsor Castle Reception (11<sup>th</sup> February):** Our CEO, alongside ten care workers from the Advisory Board and Champions Project, have been invited to attend a reception at Windsor Castle, providing a significant opportunity to elevate care worker voices in a high-profile national setting.

### **3. Financial Grants:**

- Total number of Applications received – 102 (includes financial applications at all current stages for all grants)
- Total amount spent this month – £ 26,860
- Grants were awarded via, Crisis grants, East of England Refugee fund, Oxfordshire, Drapers and Edward Cadbury.
- Applications this month were towards 8 areas in care workers lives that require financial support. These were (in order of high applications) Daily Living costs, Preventing Eviction, Car Repairs, Moving Costs, Household Items, Whitegoods, Funeral Costs, Travel Expenses.
- High number of Care workers/Senior Support workers and Health Care Assistants applied.
- As the New Year begins, care workers are experiencing a significant increase in financial pressures, including rising living costs, accumulated arrears, and late payment fees. Many have reported that their wages are fully exhausted meeting essential financial obligations, leaving insufficient funds to cover food and other household expenses for the remainder of the month. Several care workers have further advised that periods of illness have exacerbated their financial hardship, increasing existing debts and leaving them unable to meet commitments such as council tax arrears, credit card repayments, and essential vehicle repairs. As a result, some care workers are relying on food banks to secure meals for their children only. This level of deprivation is likely to lead to further deterioration in physical health, mental wellbeing, and overall financial stability.

### **4. Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHWB):**

- We currently have very limited funding available for the Mental Health Wellbeing sessions and the remaining funds are not enough to cover full sessions for applicants. Therefore, until we raise further funding the scheme will be closed.

### **5. Success Stories and Positive Outcomes:**

When Pete had a panic attack at work, he found himself walking out. The Care Workers' Charity put him in touch with a counsellor to help him find his way back.

“When I found myself walking out of my job one Monday morning, wandering the streets of Plymouth with my phone switched off in my pocket, I knew I'd reached rock bottom.”

Pete had been suffering from anxiety and feeling like an imposter at work for weeks. He had been promoted and whilst he had initially looked forward to the extra responsibility, he started to feel out of his depth. Pete has been working for the same care home for 8 years and was expected to hit the ground running in his new role, but he felt a lot of pressure and did not know how to voice his worries.

“It all came to a head in May, four weeks into my new job. When I got to work that morning, I started having a panic attack. I felt trapped, like I had to get out and away from everything.”

Pete's wife contacted The Care Workers' Charity, and he was encouraged to apply for counselling via the Mental Health and Wellbeing Support service. Pete had been signed off work due to his ill health but after weekly counselling sessions, he returned to work six weeks later, and his organisation has put training and support in place for him.

“A month on, I've had a couple of wobbles, but I'm so much better at coping with stress now.”

## 6. Calls to Action:

**We urge MP's and stakeholders to take the following action:**

- **Prioritise Funding for Mental Wellbeing:** Ensure care workers have dedicated funding for mental health and wellbeing support, including access to counselling and peer support – recognising the emotional demands of care work.
- **Champion Co-Production:** Embed care worker co-production into the design on policies, training and workplace practises. Support and promote initiatives that embed care worker voices at every stage.
- **Address the Continued Impact of the Cost-of-Living Pressures in the Care Sector:** Push and advocate for an urgent review of pay, travel expense reimbursements, sick pay and financial protections for care workers.
- **Work With Our Advisory Board and Champions:** Our Advisory Board and Champions Project is made up of incredible care workers who bring valuable insight. If you'd like to collaborate with them, get in touch.

**For further information or to discuss any points raised, please contact us at [olivia@thecwc.org.uk](mailto:olivia@thecwc.org.uk).**